

Portion Sizes for Children Age 1-4 years













The Eatwell Guide

- Children should aim to eat in line with the Eatwell guide but with a flexible approach.
- Match the portion to the person: a child aged 1 years will require smaller portions to children aged 4 years.
- Work towards giving your child 3 main meals and 2 snacks per day from the 4 main food groups (fruits and vegetables, potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates, dairy and alternatives and beans pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins).
- Limit foods and drinks high in salt, sugar and fat.
- Do not get too hung up on exact portion sizes, this is only a guide. Some days your child may eat slightly more and on others slightly less, causing it to become balanced.
- If your child is regularly eating larger portion sizes, think about gradually reducing these.



Potatoes, Bread, Rice, Pasta and Other Starchy Foods

- Offer these foods at every meal time
- These can be given as a snack
- They should make up one third of the food we eat each day
- Look for low salt, sugar and fat options
- Encourage some wholemeal/wholegrain varieties



Fruits and Vegetables

- · Offer a variety of different colours
- Offer in meals and as snacks
- Aim towards 5 portions a day
- Fresh, frozen and canned count too
- · Buy canned in natural juice or unsalted water
- Dried fruit should be eaten with a meal to protect teeth





Beans, Pulses, Fish, Eggs, Meat and Other Proteins



- Foods from this group should be given twice a day or if vegetarian 3 times a day
- These are high in iron and zinc
- You can offer these as part of snacks or meals
- Avoid processed meat and fish products that are high in fat and salt.
- Make sure fish dishes are free of bones.
- Give one omega 3 rich source such as sardines, mackerel or salmon once a week



Milk and Dairy Foods, and Dairy Alternatives

- Offer these foods 3 times a day
- Include as part of meals and snacks
- Semi-skimmed or whole milk can be used from 12 months to 2 years
- · Skimmed milk should only be given after 5 years
- Use full fat cheese and yoghurts up to 2 years
- Make sure dairy alternatives are fortified with calcium
- Do not serve rice milk to under 5's





Eat Less Often and in Small Amounts



- Limit foods high in salt, fat and sugar such as biscuits, cakes, confectionery, ice-cream and crisps.
- Avoid soft drinks such as squash, cordial or fizzy drinks as these are high in sugar.
- These foods should be given as an occasional treat and not every day.
- Sugary foods are linked to obesity in children and to tooth decay.
- Fruit-based or carbonated sugar-free or low-sugar drinks can also damage children's teeth as they are acidic. Children aged 1-4 years should not be given drinks containing artificial sweeteners.
- Some foods advertised for children would come into this category so read the label carefully.

Useful Resources

- First Steps Nutrition
 https://www.firststepsnutrition.org/
- British Dietetic Association https://www.bda.uk.com
- NHS
 https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/healthy-weight-children-advice-for-parents/
- British Nutrition Foundation https://www.nutrition.org.uk











For more support contact the NYLO team
Email: Nutrition.Skillsforlife.cav@wales.nhs.uk
Website: www.NYLO.co.uk

Telephone: 07972 732614



